

# Information Link

A Source of Information for Our Customers



Curtis L. Wolfe

In this issue, I would like to focus on the upcoming legislative session. Specifically, I would like to update you on the general funded project prioritization process discussed in the last issue as well as outline proposed legislation that will impact the Information Technology Department (ITD).

The general funded projects (over \$250,000) that were detailed in agency Information Technology (IT) plans totaled 13, 12 of which were recently prioritized by the State Information Technology Advisory Committee (SITAC). The thirteenth project was a general fund request by the Department of Human Services (DHS) for personal computer (PC) replacements. It was decided by SITAC to address this request as part of the standardization of PCs and the implementation for a four-year replacement cycle (addressed in more detail later in this issue).

The 12 projects are listed in priority order on the following page:

Continued on page 2



## INSIDE THIS ISSUE

Message From the CIO .....	1
ITD to Realign Support .....	3
Discovernd.com Replacement .....	4
Personal Computer RFP in Progress ..	5
EA's Testing Tools Update .....	6
On the Job for ITD .....	6
Forging/Spoofing Email Address .....	7

<b>Project</b>	<b>Agency</b>	<b>Total Cost</b>	<b>General Fund</b>
1. ND Public Safety Mobile Communications	Division of Emergency Management	\$ 8,700,000	\$ 6,000,000
2. MMIS Rewrite	Department of Human Services	\$29,188,159	\$ 3,667,820
3. CJIS – Establish services to support deployment	Information Technology Department	\$ 1,000,000	\$ 1,000,000
4. Integrated Tax System	Office of the Tax Commissioner	\$12,625,000	\$12,625,000
5. CAD – Computer Aided Dispatch	Division of Emergency Management	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
6. ITAG	Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation	\$ 375,000	\$ 375,000
7. Mainframe Migration	Information Technology Department	\$ 6,300,000	\$ 6,300,000
8. AS/400 Migration	Secretary of State	\$ 500,000	\$ 500,000
9. Time and Labor	Enterprise Architecture	\$ 700,000	\$ 700,000
10. Enhanced Support Center	Information Technology Department	\$ 1,800,000	\$ 1,000,000
11. GIS	Information Technology Department	\$ 325,000	\$ 325,000
12. HIPAA	Department of Human Services	\$ 3,190,000	\$ 319,000
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>\$65,203,159</b>	<b>\$33,311,820</b>

Once the Governor's budget is released, this list will be updated and presented to the legislature at the beginning of the 2005 Legislative Session.

With regard to legislation, there are four bills being considered by the Interim Information Technology Committee that will affect ITD.

#### **50129:**

This bill draft clarifies existing language in statute for both the Information Technology Committee and ITD. It also clarifies what should be in ITD's annual report.

Continued on page 3

It will be determined in November if the Interim IT Committee will vote to submit these bills to the next session of the legislature.

**50130:**

This bill draft establishes a statewide information technology improvement fund. This fund would be used during the interim to fund technology projects that provide improvements in the efficiency of state government services or projects involving multiple state agencies.

**50131:**

This bill draft “cleans-up” some confusion in language created by various statute sections. It specifically addresses language related to major IT projects, the SITAC, standards and information technology services.

**50132:**

This bill draft creates specific language that exempts ITD from having to promulgate administrative rules for standards, policies, and guidelines that only affect state agencies, counties, cities, and school districts.

It will be determined in November if the Interim IT Committee will vote to submit these bills to the next session of the legislature.

As always, I will continue to keep you updated on all the issues and initiatives impacting ITD.

## **ITD to Realign Support**

Dirk Huggett

A change of vision within ITD is taking place in the way the department supplies its support services. Due to significant changes in support best practices, customer needs, and customer expectations, ITD needs to make adjustments to the way it currently handles these areas in order to provide top-notch service to its customers. The department needs to ensure that what it is measuring and reporting upon are still the things ITD should be measuring. And the department wants to be able to provide one-stop shopping for all of ITD’s services. Faced with increasing needs of enterprise level software such as ConnectND & Criminal Justice Information Sharing System (CJIS), higher expectations from the recent consolidation efforts, and the need to improve the way ITD manages its support, this need to change at the service center level becomes critical.

The Enhanced Support Center Initiative (ESCI) focuses on the tools aspect of the changes required. There are five individual projects in the initiative.

**Upgrade the HEAT System:** When ITD installed HEAT, it was a DOS-based system. Since then, most of its upgrades have focused on minimizing the changes to its processes. This project will take the latest HEAT release and re-implement it using industry best practices, such as those suggested by the Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL). This process focuses upon where ITD wants to be in the future rather than where it was in the past.

**Institute a Training Program:** Ensuring that staff has the training it needs to absorb the new technologies and applications implemented within agencies is a

Continued on page 4

ITD plans to make adjustments to the way it currently handles its support center in order to continue to provide top-notch service to its customers.

critical success factor. This need is not a one-time effort, but a continuous effort. For example, as new procedures are documented, ITD needs a process to roll out those procedures and ensure that staff is comfortable performing them.

**Implement an Asset Management Tool:** Significant savings may be achieved if ITD can identify which software is licensed and which is not being used. In order to manage this information, ITD needs a tool that automatically identifies Information Technology (IT) assets, both hardware and software, and deliver that information to the ConnectND asset module. This will also ensure that ITD has accurate data in the event that disaster recovery be implemented. This tool will also provide remote control capabilities to push out software updates and to assist in troubleshooting issues. ITD would like to offer full desktop support for agencies that wish to purchase the service. This tool is critical for ITD to maintain effective service levels.

**Implement a Diagnostic Tool:** Consolidation has made it more difficult for agencies to troubleshoot issues from an end-to-end standpoint. Therefore, ITD must take action to fulfill that gap. ITD wants to implement a multi-part tool that monitors network activity and applications. This gives its help desk personnel a valuable tool to quickly identify what part of the system is causing the issue. ITD could then quickly narrow down problems if it appears to be an issue with a PC, LAN or WAN, or a server. ITD also expects this tool to allow better monitoring of the entire network and to allow ITD to become more proactive in its issue resolution.

**Finally, ITD Wants to Build a Knowledgebase:** This tool will give its frontline support personnel answers at their fingertips allowing them to diagnose and repair more calls more quickly on the first contact. This knowledgebase also forms the basis for self-help, allowing customers to look-up and find answers themselves, even if it is outside normal operating hours. This tool should also help ITD establish an on-line “chat” support, giving ITD’s customers one more avenue to connect with the department.

There are many other things that can be accomplished to help ITD improve its support center, including streamlining internal escalation processes, better communication, and building a better rapport with second and third tier support units. The tools mentioned above are some ways to improve ITD’s level of service to its customers. ITD is asking for general fund dollars to help offset the infrastructure costs allowing ITD to keep its cost to the agencies lower. The speed at which ITD proceeds on this project is dependant upon funding by the legislature.

If you have any questions regarding this project, please contact Rob Gall at 328-1990 or Jerry Fossum at 328-4040.

## **Discovernd.com Replacement**

Vern Welder

Discovernd.com, North Dakota’s official state web portal, is showing its age. ITD is organizing a committee of the state’s business leaders to participate in a discovernd.com replacement project. Curt Wolfe, ITD’s Chief Information Officer, has asked members of the Enterprise Architecture’s State Information Technol-

Continued on page 5

A committee is being formed to develop requirements for replacing Discovernd.com for North Dakota's new web portal. The challenge is to develop a portal that meets constituent's needs as well as state government's needs.

ogy Advisory Committee (SITAC) to volunteer for service on a Discovernd.com Replacement Committee. ITD will also invite other state information technology leaders to participate on the committee.

The Replacement Committee's job is to develop requirements for North Dakota's new web portal. Also, they will be asked to promote the committee's vision to their peers. ITD's web design team will use the gathered requirements to develop prototypes for committee approval. The challenge is to develop a portal that meets constituent's needs as well as state government's needs.

The timeframe for completing the new site will depend on how quickly the committee can be organized and how much time they can dedicate to the project.

### **Personal Computer RFP in Progress**

Pat Forster

As this article goes to print, the Enterprise Architecture (EA) program is in the midst of soliciting proposals from personal computer (PC) vendors through a Request for Proposals (RFP) process. The intent is to award a term contract to a single vendor to supply standardized PC equipment for state agencies over the next four years. The RFP is the culmination of a project started by the EA Architecture Review Board in early 2004 to begin moving state government toward a more standardized PC environment. A first step in the process was to define standard specifications for both desktop and laptop computers and to survey agencies' forecasts of purchases based on those specifications. The State's standard specifications include two desktop models (a mainstream or "office automation" model and a power user model) and two laptop models (a mainstream model and a power user model). EA also conducted an initial Request for Information (RFI) with vendors to validate that aggregated purchasing based on standard specifications would generate overall cost savings to the State.

The RFP was issued June 7 to all PC manufacturers participating in the Western States Contract Alliance (WSCA). Vendor proposals were due August 12 and the State received six proposals from Dell, Gateway, HP, Howard Computers, IBM, and MPC. The Enterprise Architecture team conducting the RFP and evaluation of proposals includes representatives from Department of Human Services, Department of Transportation, Information Technology Department, Job Service, Tax Department, Workforce Safety and Insurance, and ND Association of Counties. Representatives from the State Procurement Office and Office of Attorney General are also providing professional assistance to the team.

The evaluation process includes both technical and cost components to be considered by the evaluation team. Vendors were invited to provide oral presentations of their proposals in Bismarck during the week of September 7. The evaluation team is scheduled to complete the evaluation and scoring process and make a recommendation for award to the Architecture Review Board by mid-October. Upon approval by the board, the recommendation will be forwarded for final review and approval by the CIO and State Information Technology Advisory Committee in November. The target date for the contract to begin is December 1, 2004.

Continued on page 6

It is anticipated the overall savings generated by the RFP award will likely exceed the \$1.1 million equipment lifecycle savings initially estimated as a result of the RFI study, thus allowing agencies to move towards standardizing the State's fleet of PC equipment while holding the line on costs.

While it is too early to know the final outcome of the evaluation and award at this writing, it is an exciting time since we have received very competitive bids from the vendors. It is anticipated that the overall savings generated by the RFP award will likely exceed the \$1.1 million equipment lifecycle savings that was initially estimated as a result of the RFI study, thus allowing agencies to move towards standardizing the State's fleet of PC equipment while holding the line on costs. Look for an announcement of the RFP award in November.

## **EA's Software Testing Tools Initiative Update**

Vern Welder

This is follow-up to the July 2004 Information Link article that announced an Enterprise Architecture (EA) initiative to research and recommend automated testing tools for state government.

In July and August, the Enterprise Architecture Sub-Group issued a Request For Proposal (RFP) and evaluated products from IBM Rational, Segue, and Computer Associates. Each vendor demonstrated their product and performed a proof-of-concept on a ConnectND application and a Bank of ND application. The evaluation committee selected Segue's tool and presented that recommendation to the Enterprise Architecture Review Board on September 1, 2004.

The next step is to negotiate costs with Segue and design implementation architecture. The EA Test Tool Sub-Group will provide advice on procurement, implementation, and administration of the tool.

The feedback ITD received suggests that ITD should offer this as a service similar to its Load Testing service. ITD is seriously considering that option for state agencies.

If you are interested in using test tools, contact Kyle Forster, ITD's Software Development Architect, at [kforster@state.nd.us](mailto:kforster@state.nd.us) or (701) 328-4323.



## **On The Job For ITD**

Working as a web designer for ITD, Brent Larson coordinates and designs user and ADA friendly web interfaces for state agencies. Employed by ITD for the past 3 and a half years, Larson said he enjoys finding solutions for design and process problems he encounters on the job.

In his spare free time, Larson enjoys participating in a variety of outdoor activities, including biking, camping, snowboarding, and photography.



**Information Technology  
Department  
Executive Management**

**Curtis Wolfe**  
Chief Information Officer

**Mike Ressler**  
Deputy CIO/Director of ITD

**Nancy Walz**  
Director, Policy and Planning  
Division

**Dan Sipes**  
Director, Administrative  
Services Division

**Vern Welder**  
Director, Software Develop-  
ment Division

**L. Dean Glatt**  
Director, Computer Systems  
Division

**Jerry Fossum**  
Director, Telecommunications  
Division

**Ardy Pfaff**  
Director, Human Resources  
Division

Information Link is published quarterly by the North Dakota Information Technology Department. Contact the editor if you are interested in contributing information or would like to be added to the e-mail distribution list.

**North Dakota Information  
Technology Department**

600 East Boulevard Ave  
Dept 112  
Bismarck, ND 58505-0100  
(701) 328-3190  
FAX: (701) 328-3000  
1-800-366-6888 TTY  
1-800-366-6889 VOICE  
<http://discovernd.com/itd/>

Editor: Deborah Mosset

## Forging/Spoofing Email Addresses

Tony Aukland

Have you ever received an email from individuals who told you they did not send it? Have other people told you they received an email from you and you did not send one to them? What about receiving an undeliverable message from an address you never sent an email to? If any of these situations have ever happened to you, it could mean that you have been spoofed!

Spoofing, also known as forging, an email address is the latest form of email annoyance. In short, someone manipulates an email to make it look like someone else sent it. It is relatively easy to do, especially for people who spam and write viruses.

Often times a virus will infect a personal computer (PC) and literally turn it into an email server. When this happens, the virus scans the PC or the web for email addresses to spoof when propagating its payload. The virus grabs one address to use as the sender and another address to use as the recipient. More times than not, the address inserted as the sender does not belong to the person whose PC is infected.

When you receive spoofed messages at work, it does not mean your work PC is infected. In most cases, even the person that sent the message does not have a virus. Rather, some PC on the Internet that has access to both addresses has intentionally generated the confusion.

Unfortunately, there is little that can be done today to eliminate email spoofing. The Internet is overwhelmed with infected PCs. And the protocol used to transfer email (SMTP - Simple Mail Transfer Protocol) is outdated. As initiatives such as "Sender-ID" move forward and as people come to understand the necessity of protecting their PCs from viruses, the problem will slowly diminish.

ITD receives a large amount of support calls as a result of spoofed email. In most cases, the original source of the message is nearly impossible to track down. Even if it can be found, the problem is so widespread that contacting each and every person with an infected PC is simply not possible. In most cases, the Information Technology Department (ITD) simply advises people to delete the message and verify that their local antivirus software is up-to-date.

If you would like to learn more, a quick search on Google for "email spoofing" will generate a wealth of information. Please feel free to contact ITD with any specific questions by calling 328-3190.

## Information Technology Consolidation

Many states are realizing the benefits of Information Technology (IT) consolidation. Check out the article published in the Summer issue of STATETECH magazine at <http://discovernd.com/itd/pubs/2004-it-article.pdf>